

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0513 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: 18 RICHFIELD AVENUE, READING

Proposal: Display of a scheme of advertisements comprising high-level and mid-level fascia signage, including non-illuminated and internally illuminated elements with built-up lettering and logo; internally illuminated signage to the entrance canopy; associated low-level external LED accent lighting; and two freestanding double-sided digital totem signs with static image displays to replace the existing totems.

Applicant: Mr Andrew Joyce

Received date: 15/04/2026

Target Decision date: 03/07/2026 (EoT)

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site consists of a two-storey building facing Richfield Avenue, with an entrance canopy (porte-cochère) to the front that allows vehicles to drive through. There are two existing totem signs installed at each end of the width of the site within the flower beds and adjacent to the access points from Richfield Avenue. The building is currently used as a casino known as Genting, which includes various existing advertisement signs. The surrounding area consists predominantly of commercial and industrial units and warehouses, and the site is located opposite the Rivermead Leisure Complex.

Permission was recently granted for an enlarged external terrace and formation of new bin store behind (ref: PL/26/0353)



Front & east side views of 18 Richfield Avenue, taken on 29/04 & 10/04/26 respectively by the Officer



View of the one of the existing totems, taken on 29/04/2026

The site is within an Air Quality Management Area and Flood Zone 2.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application seeks advertisement consent for the display of a scheme of advertisements comprising high-level fascia signage, mid-level fascia banners, entrance canopy signage, with two freestanding digital totems to replace existing. The signage includes a combination of non-illuminated and internally illuminated elements, together with external LED accent lighting. These include:

High Level

- Individual natural white internally illuminated LED opal acrylic letters forming the words 'GENTING CASINO' on the front and side elevations along with a red acrylic logo, pressed aluminium returns, and an aluminium back plate.
- Non-illuminated vinyl graphics on the existing fascia panel.
- Replacement of existing blue neon-effect LED lighting strips with new amber LEDs affixed to the fascia in the same location.

Mid Level

- Vinyl graphics of approximately 1.13 m in height along the upper portion of the non-glazed front panels, below the first-floor windows.
- Amber LED lighting would be installed at the bottom edge of the vinyl graphics and across the full width of the front at that same alignment and horizontally above the graphics at the bottom edge of the first-floor windows.
- Internally illuminated signage 'Welcome' to replace 'Genting Casino' on the front of the entrance canopy, along with associated low-level external LED accent lighting.
- Internally illuminated signage to the west elevation of the canopy with the words 'Genting Casino' to replace existing lettering.
- Above the entrance canopy, the existing signage zone would be divided by a new continuous coving from both sides; the upper section would be painted pale cream to match the existing finish, while the lower section (immediately above the canopy) would be covered with vinyl graphics.

Totem Signs

- Two new freestanding double-sided digital totem signs (Signs 19 & 20) with integrated display screens (166 cm x 93.5 cm) showing static image displays changing periodically are proposed to replace the existing totems in the same locations, same dimensions and with colours and luminance levels to match the proposed branding. These would display the name and logo of the business, together with the information 'No Membership Required' and 'Additional Parking to the Rear', accompanied by an arrow.

Poster boxes

- Removal of two poster boxes from the front elevation.

Existing and proposed front elevations



Existing and proposed east elevations



Existing and proposed west elevations



It should be noted that the elevations show the approved side extension as approved under ref: PL/26/0353 and do not form part of this advert scheme.

Plans considered:

- Drawing No. 2437.P03 Existing Advertising Floor Plans
- Drawing No. 2437.P04 Proposed Advertising Floor Plans, dated 04/2026
- Drawing No. 2437.P05 Existing Advertising Elevations, dated 04/2026
- Drawing No. 2437.P06 Proposed Advertising Elevations

- Drawing No. 2437.P07 Proposed Signage Details, dated 04/2026
 - Ref. 2437-4.1-jeg-illuminationstrategy – Illumination Strategy, prepared by DESIGN AT SOURCE, dated 15/04/2026
 - Ref. 2437-4.1-jeg-twimc1 – Covering Letter, prepared by DESIGN AT SOURCE, dated 15/04/2026
 - Ref. 2437-4.1-jeg-advertising – Planning Statement, prepared by DESIGN AT SOURCE, dated 15/04/2026
- Received 15/04/2026.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORIES:

- PL/89/0833 - Illuminated box sign. Historical.
- PL/97/0327 - Alterations to front and side facades, replacement entrance canopy, alterations to front landscaping and parking area, demolition of existing bottle store and erection of new bottle store. Historical.
- PL/06/0103 - New Casino signage. Approved 11/08/2006.
- PL/07/1336 - Installation of illuminated front and entrance signs, an illuminated directional car park sign, and two non-illuminated detail signs at the side of the entrance covered area. Approved 10/09/2007.
- PL/10/2022 - 2 non illuminated flag poles and flags and 2 internally illuminated sets of individual letters. Approved 13/12/2010.
- PL/12/1375 - Introduction of a glazed shop front onto Richfield Avenue to replace solid wall and external alterations including new lighting, changes to entrance door and creation of an external smoking terrace. Approved 12/06/2012.
- PL/26/0353 - Enlargement of existing external terrace and formation of new bin store behind. Approved 11/05/2026.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Environmental Protection: No comments received.
- RBC Transport Development Control: No objections subject to conditions.
- Site Notice: – A site notice was displayed on 29th April 2026 in front of the application site. The 21-day consultation period ended on 20th May 2026. No letters of representation have been received.



Site notice photo

EQUALITY ACT 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age and disability. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development. The proposal is specifically to address the needs of a disabled person.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers under these regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and any other relevant factors. Regulation 3 states that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural, or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety include highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

OU4: Advertisements

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A submission draft of the Local Plan was submitted on 9th May 2025 and was at Examination in February 2026.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues for consideration are:

- a) Visual Amenity; and
- b) Safety

a) Visual Amenity

The proposed advertisement signage at high level, mid-level, and to the canopy is primarily intended to replace the existing signage. While the high-level signage would introduce new built-up lettering, the canopy signage would not. As the proposed advertisements are of a similar colour to the existing ones and would be new, they are considered to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Although the central part of the building would be subdivided by new coving, this is considered to respect the existing character of the building, as the proposed coving would continue the existing design approach. The treatment of this area would also be similar in type to the wider proposed scheme. In addition, the removal of two poster boxes is not considered to result in a significant visual change. Therefore, the proposals are not considered to detract from the character and appearance of the host building.

With regard to the replacement of the two existing totem signs, the proposed totems would incorporate back-to-back externally rated 75-inch monitors displaying static advertisements, which is the main difference compared to the existing totems. Their size, colour, and location would remain largely unchanged, being set back from the driveway. The surrounding area is characterised by commercial and industrial uses, with several standalone signs along Richfield Avenue. The two replacement totem signs are therefore not considered to detract from the character and appearance of either the wider area or the main building in terms of their scale, design, siting, or visual impact.

The Transport consultee has confirmed that the proposed luminance levels for both the fascia and the two totem signs are acceptable, subject to conditions.

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable and complies with Policies CC7, TR3 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

b) Safety

The NPPG (in particular in this instance Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 & Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 18b-078-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety.

The Transport consultee response confirms that there are no transport objections to this application, subject to conditions to secure public safety. Therefore, it is concluded that there would be no detrimental effect with regard to highway safety and the proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan Policies TR3 and OU4.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Approved with conditions

Recommended Conditions:

1. Standard Advert Requirements

- i. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
- ii. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to:
 - a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
 - b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
 - c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
- iii. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.
- iv. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.
- v. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

REASON: In accordance with Schedule 2, Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

2. Approved Plans

The advertisements hereby consented shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Drawing No. 2437.P04 Proposed Advertising Floor Plans, dated 04/2026, received 15/04/2026.
- Drawing No. 2437.P06 Proposed Advertising Elevations, dated 04/2026, received 15/04/2026.
- Drawing No. 2437.P07 Proposed Signage Details, dated 04/2026, received 15/04/2026.
- Ref. 2437-4.1-jeg-illuminationstrategy – Illumination Strategy, prepared by DESIGN AT SOURCE, dated and received 15/04/2026.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the advertisement is carried out in accordance the details hereby approved in accordance with Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

3. The maximum luminance from the high-level and mid-level fascia signs, including (Signs numbered 1-18 on Drawing No. p07 dated April 26), hereby consented shall not exceed 200 cd/m2.

REASON: To protect the visual amenity and avoid excessive glare that could lead to a danger to highway users in accordance with Policy CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. No individual advertisement displayed shall contain moving (or apparently moving images) or flashing images and nor shall they display any telephone number, website email or other social media details

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. No advertisement shall be displayed for a duration of less than 10 seconds.

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

6. The signs displayed shall not resemble road signs;

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. Controls shall be in place to ensure the uninterrupted transition of images and that transitions should be no more than 0.1 seconds;

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. Should the installation break down it defaults to either a black screen or freezes in one position, no error messages should flash;

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

9. The maximum luminance of advertisements displayed from two proposed totems (Signs numbered 19-20 on Drawing No. p07 dated April 26) should not exceed 230 cd/m2 above ambient light levels.

REASON: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 AND OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.